

Ames Historical Society

AMES • IOWA

Newsletter to Members 2015 SUMMER...ISSUE #3/4

*Discovering our history,
Preserving our past,
Sharing our stories.*



Ames Historical Society Board:

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Co-President Kathy Svec
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The Board meets the 2nd Thursday of each month 6:45pm at 416 Douglas. Members welcome!

Staff:

Executive Director Casie Vance
Projects Coordinator Alex Fejfar
Collections/Volunteer Coordinator Hannah Frederick

Emeritus Staff:

Alan Spohnheimer, Margaret Vance,
Dennis Wendell

Ames Historical Society is an incorporated, 501c3 not-for-profit organization whose mission is to engage our diverse public and provide unique opportunities to learn about Ames history.

Headquarters: 416 Douglas, Ames, IA 50010
Open Mon-Fri, 1-5pm, Sat 10am-4pm

Open Thursdays until 8pm through August

Mail: PO Box 821, Ames, IA 50010

Phone: 515-232-2148

E-mail: info@ameshistory.org

Website: www.AmesHistory.org

Facebook: www.facebook.com/ameshistoricalsociety

The **newsletter** is published four times a year for AHS members. Direct comments and questions to: Editor, PO Box 821, Ames, IA 50010 or e-mail above. Editor: Kathy Svec

Hoggatt School is located on the grounds of Meeker School, near 18th and Burnett, Ames, Iowa. Due to construction at Meeker School, Hoggatt will be closed until spring 2016.



**SOCIETY MEMBERS AND THEIR GUESTS
ARE INVITED TO
THE ANNUAL BENEFIT DINNER
ON SATURDAY, AUGUST 29,
5:30 PM - SOCIAL
6:00 PM - DINNER**

Please join us for a tasty dinner followed by a fun evening of LOCAL HISTORY TRIVIA, presentation of the Farwell Brown Award and a raffle that will support the Society's programs and mission.
\$75/per person

At the Oakwood Road Community Center,
2400 Oakwood Road, Ames

RSVP by August 21, 2015

Names of attendees _____

Email address _____

We accept checks made out to Ames Historical Society or credit cards:

☐ MasterCard ☐ Visa

Card number _____

Expiration date _____

Send to A.H.S., PO Box 821, Ames, IA 50010
or call 515-232-2148

Exhibit Continues

PEOPLE OF OUR PARKS Exhibit about parks' namesakes on view until September 30



People of Our Parks tells the stories of the 16 parks named after Ames people, including Inis Grove, Gartner, Kurtz, Hayden, Daley, Teagarden, O'Neil and more!

The story of each park is told with maps, pictures and artifacts from our collection. And, you can take a virtual 360° tour of all 16 parks on the digital stereoscope!

Open Mon-Fri, 1-5pm,
Sat. 10am-4pm.

Upcoming Events

- Sat., August 29, 8am-12:30pm: **Living in the Past at the History Trailer**, Main St. Farmers Market
- Sat., August 29, 5:30pm: **Annual Benefit Dinner: Historical Trivia Night!** (see page 1)
- Thur., Sept. 3, 5-8pm, **MusicWalk Open House** at the History Center
- Wed., Sept. 9, 7pm: **The Ames Connection to WWII's Manhattan Project**, Ames Public Library Auditorium
- Wed. Sept. 12, 8am-12:30pm: **Old & New at the History Trailer** at the No. Grand Farmers Market
- Sat. Sept. 26, 8am-12:30pm: **Old Fashioned Games at the History Trailer**, Main Street Farmers Market
- Sun., Sept 27, 10am-5pm, **Octagon Arts Festival Open House** at the History Center
- Thur., Oct. 15, 7-8:30pm: **Members After Hours** opening for the new exhibit at the History Center
- Sat. Oct. 31, 8am-12:30pm: **Skunk River Finds at the History Trailer**, Main St. Farmers Market
- Fri., Nov. 13, 5-8pm: **35th Anniversary Bash**, more information TBA
- Sat., Dec. 5, noon-2pm, our annual **Old Fashioned Christmas** at the History Center, crafts & treats

Society News

New exhibits through November

- **Kaffee Klasch:** The Collegiate Manufacturing "Kaffee Klatsch" hosted informal meetings each morning in the "catacombs" of company's building at 5th and Douglas. The meetings, attended by local businessmen and the movers and shakers of Ames, gave birth to ideas such as the Chamber of Commerce, United Way and the Ames park system.
- **Early Neighboring Towns:** In the early years of Ames there were many smaller nearby settlements. As Ames began to grow, these small towns became incorporated into the Ames city limits. This exhibit focuses on Ontario and Bloomington.

Munn Lumber Cart

In June, an unusual artifact was delivered to the History Center: a metal cart originally used by the H.L. Munn Lumber Company.



The cart had been abandoned near the Ames power plant and a tree had grown into it. As the power plant staff prepared to tear down a nearby building, they offered to cut the tree off at the base and donate the cart with the tree stump attached! The cart illustrates two things – early lumber yard equipment and what happens to artifacts when they are not cared for! The cart is displayed near the parking lot on the east side of our building. Munn Lumber moved from their Duff Avenue location near the power plant in 1998.

More New Additions

Other recent additions to the collection were:

- 1938-1954 building plans for the original McFarland Clinic at 313 5th Street and its additions
 - Photo-documentation of Crawford School's mural
 - 1964 Ames Centennial commemorative coin
 - Neta Snook rocking chair (early Ames woman pilot)
- Please call in advance if you are interested in donating materials to our collection – 515-232-2148.

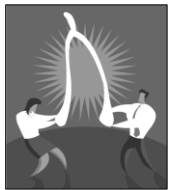
Love Our Volunteers!

Volunteers worked **460 hours** in May and **443 hours** in June. In 2015 through June, total volunteer hours are **2,965** valued at \$61,849. Through June last year: 2,222 hours.

The staff welcomed three new volunteers in May and June: Tiffany Tope and Katie Kanauss, both recent ISU history graduates who will start graduate school at ISU this fall and Lucas Coleman, an ISU history student who will help with the Main Street research project. The Society greatly enjoys our college student volunteers and miss them when they graduate!

The staff works to match volunteers with projects that are of interest to them. Contact the Society if you are interested in helping in some capacity! This fall, we will be in need of front desk hosts several days a week.

Society Wish List:



Grateful thanks go to Doug Biggs and Gloria Betcher for extending our subscription to Newspaperarchive.com in memory of Jeff Benson. And, we were very pleased to receive David R. Smith's \$100 for artifact acquisitions.

Thank you all so much! Still needed:

- Photos of Ames in the 1960s (this decade is largely missing from the Ames Tribune archive).
- Funding for a Knox Box, ~\$317 - a small, thick metal lock box that building owners attach to their building. It holds a key and is accessible only to firefighters for quick access in the event of a fire.
- Donations for a much-needed website upgrade
- Compact-VHS to VHS converter
- Funding for a regular student internship position
- Ongoing subscription to newspaperarchive.com (6 months - \$99.95)

Contact us at 515-232-2148 or info@ameshistory.org if you can help!

Iowa Museum Week Events

The June 10 Open House attracted 75 people, mostly two groups from Ames Community Preschool Center. They enjoyed the 360-degree digital stereoscope from the current exhibit, coloring pages and "living in the past" hands-on materials. About 180 people enjoyed the June 13 Ice Cream Social where there was ice cream and kids' activities put on by the Ames Community Arts Council and VERB. We were pleased to see old friends as well as new people through our doors!

We Get Mail & Calls

Glenn Chatfield, Ohio, contacted us: "We have a hobby of photographing country schools and like to get as much information as possible about them. We acquired a book by William Sherman [*Iowa's Country Schools—Landmarks of Learning*] which said Hoggatt School was located on the Meeker school playground,



so when we were visiting Ames, we went to look for it. We have a blog on which all our photos are posted and the trip to Ames gave us five to add to our collection; three

we knew about and two we stumbled across.

Hoggatt is the last one posted; you will see I added the information you provided, as well as the link you gave me. See my blog at <http://schoolhouses.blogspot.com>."

The Society's staff provided background information for Chatfield on our 1862 Hoggatt School.

In June, **Brian Bedore** called the History Center. He had purchased a dresser at Julie's Resale Shop in Ephraim, WI. When he took the drawers out, he noticed that there was a "Bigelow & Huntington" stamp, just barely visible. He googled "Huntington" and got our website and called in. Front Desk host, Margaret Vance directed him to some photos on our website and he was delighted to have more detailed information and pictures of the long-ago Main Street store. He plans to fix the dresser up and add a mirror to the top.



Bigelow & Huntington's store front, 1885

Remembering Jeff Benson

Many in the Ames community were saddened by the sudden passing of Jeff Benson, life-long Ames resident and a valued member of the City of Ames Planning & Housing Department. Jeff was a 1970 Ames High graduate who earned degrees from ISU in landscape architecture and community and regional planning. Jeff was the City's liaison to neighborhood organizations throughout Ames and an amiable resource for all types of projects. He and his wife, Margaret Elbert, shared a strong interest in the Lincoln Highway and they were always willing to share their research with others. The Society is pleased to have two DVDs of Jeff presenting lectures on the topic.



The Society was designated to receive memorials in Jeff's honor and has been grateful for over \$2,500 to date that will be channeled toward our much-needed website upgrade project.

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About Those Bricks



In April, 500 bricks from an 80-foot section of old sidewalk at the northeast corner of Sixth & Carroll were salvaged by an AHS crew with permission from the City. The sidewalk dated from 1905.

In June, the 500 bricks were moved to Hoggatt School. They will be installed as a sidewalk from the front door out to a new

concrete sidewalk to be constructed by the school district yet this summer. The Hoggatt Committee was puzzling over an appropriately old-looking way to bring visitors to the door of the school and this seemed the perfect use for the vintage pavers!

Thanks to Speakers & Olde Main

The Society extends its sincere thanks to the speakers who presented in our 2015 Lecture Series: Shannon Bardole, Lisa Ossian, Doug Biggs, Carole Gieseke and Jim Heemstra. Lisa was funded by an Iowa Humanities Board grant, but all the others donated their time and research. Their enriching contributions to our trove of local history stories are invaluable! Thanks go too to Olde Main Brewing Company for the donated gift card that provided post-lecture hospitality to the speakers. All the lectures were recorded and are on DVD.

Membership Drive

The Society's Membership Committee is hard at work to meet their 2015 goal of 50 new members. So far this year, 33 new members have joined our ranks. Current members who would like to recommend others may send names and addresses to info@ameshistory.org and we will send an invitation. As of June, the membership stands at 619. Memberships provide essential, broad-based, ongoing support for the Society's operations.

Here's a Good Idea

Board member Bob Bourne shared this easy idea: "I recently updated the beneficiary on one of my IRAs and made it Ames Historical Society. This is a refinement to estate planning that may not apply to many people, but it is worth mentioning as a possibility for those who would like to include the Society in their plans."

News Briefs

BOOK SALE: The Society's Book Sale in May generated \$582 in used book sales and \$309.20 in gift shop sales, for a total of \$891.20! Grateful thanks to all who donated books and those who came and bought!

HISTORY TRAILER: During the 2014-15 school year, the trailer was taken to all five public elementary schools in Ames for presentations to 3rd graders about life in earlier times.

HOW TO DONATE ARTIFACTS: Residents interested in contributing Ames artifacts or archives to our collection are asked to first give us a call or drop us an email. We can let you know if the items you have will fit our collections guidelines and if so, set a time for drop-off. 515-232-2148, info@ameshistory.org.

HOGGATT SCHOOL: The schoolhouse will be closed until spring 2016 due to construction at Meeker School.

FREE NEWSLETTER BUNDLES: Free bundles of past issues of the newsletter are available to anyone who would like them. They are a treasure trove of local history information. Stop in during open hours or call 515-232-2148. Offer good as long as supplies last.

FREE ANCESTRY.COM AVAILABLE: Explore your heritage for free at the State Historical Society's Library & Archives Reading Room in Des Moines. There, access is available to the enhanced version of the www.Ancestry.com database of censuses, vital records, military records and other resources. Reading Room hours are 12:30-4:30, Tue.-Wed. and 9-4:30, Thu.-Sat. Contact jeffrey.dawson@iowa.gov for information.

Banning Project

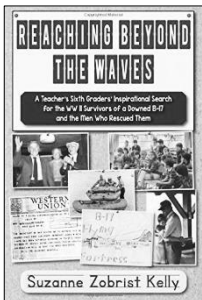


The Society is a co-sponsor with “Greatest Stories Never Told,” a non-profit Oklahoma organization that tells the stories of unknown minority heroes. GSNT is working on the story of James Herman Banning and will develop a traveling exhibit and an interdisciplinary curriculum guide.

Banning was born in 1899 on an Oklahoma farm. His mother taught her children and other African and Native American children to read and write in her one-room school, giving Herman the background he needed to be accepted at Iowa State College. He developed an early interest in flying and his experience in Iowa propelled him on the path to become the first African American to receive a U.S. Dept. of Commerce pilot’s license. He was recruited as the Chief Pilot and Instructor at the Bessie Coleman Aero Club in Los Angeles, where he came up with an audacious plan to become the first African American to fly across the country during the Great Depression. Banning wanted to present a lasting statement that African Americans could make real contributions to aviation.

See more about this stirring story at www.jameshermanbanning.org.

Reaching Beyond the Waves



A new book by retired Ames school teacher, Suzanne Kelly, tells the story of how she used a true WWII story to teach her elementary students a multitude of lessons, from using reference materials to writing letters. *Reaching Beyond the Waves* is an account of how Kelly read her students a tale of pilot survival in the

South Pacific that lead them to track down the survivors in 1985. The book is an amazing story of connections made through persistent, pre-internet searching! Find it in local stores and on Amazon.

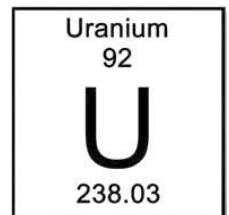
FTB Videotapes to DVD

Ames historian and the Society’s founder, Farwell T. Brown, used his research and photo collection to record a number of videotapes recounting various chapters of Ames history. Those videotapes have now been transferred to DVD and can be viewed at the History Center or checked out.

Manhattan Project Talk Reprised

If you missed last October’s talk about Iowa State’s top-secret role in World War II’s Manhattan Project, mark your calendar for **Wed., Sept. 9, 2015**. Kathy Svec and Ames Laboratory’s Steve Karsjen will again present their program that drew an overflow crowd: *The Ames Connection to WWII’s Manhattan Project*. It will be at 7pm at the Ames Public Library auditorium.

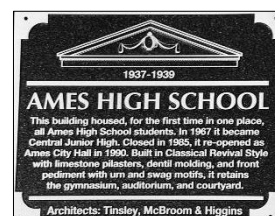
The historic and controversial event of the first atomic bomb could not have happened without the refined uranium that was supplied by Iowa State College. The project was led by Frank Spedding and Harley Wilhelm. Svec’s father, Harry, was one of the team of researchers who were at the center of the problem – creating 99% pure uranium that could be further separated into fissionable material. New to the program will be Wilhelm’s story told by his grand-daughter, Teresa Waldof.



Anyone Know Harley?

An important local history figure was Harley Wilhelm, a scientist at Iowa State College who was instrumental in developing purified uranium for the Manhattan Project. His grand-daughter, Teresa Wilhelm Waldof, is writing his biography and is seeking information from anyone who knew him in any context. Contact her at 507-285-5659, 507-421-0406 or twaldof@yahoo.com.

Historic Building Plaques



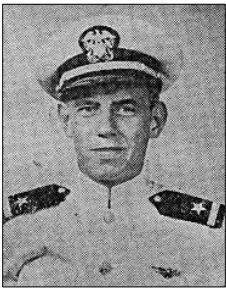
The Ames Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) has initiated a program of exterior metal building plaques that describe the builder and history of a structure. The initial group of plaques will be in the downtown area. Once they are installed, the program may be extended to other local structures.

Thanks to Peggy

Former Society Board member, Peggy Baer, undertook an important organizing project – putting order to the Society’s own records, from minutes of meetings to files on various projects. As we approach our 35th anniversary, having these materials in coherent order will be very important! This was her final contribution before she and her husband moved to Colorado. Peggy offered her substantial expertise to the Society for 15+ years!

Keeping Memories Alive

By Hannah Frederick, Collections Coordinator



George Gustave Gutman Jr. was a patrol bomber during WWII who flew PBMs and PBYS. He was stationed stateside because he was assigned to protect the American coast from enemy attack.

Gutman graduated from Denison High School (Iowa) in 1941 and soon after, his family moved to

Ames, living at 814 Wilson Avenue. He was employed by Howard Flying Service in Ames before entering the Armed forces in September 1943.

He trained at Mt. Vernon, Iowa, then graduated from Navy Pre-Flight School, St. Mary's College, California and went on to Naval Air training at Livermore, California. He



then transferred to the training base at Corpus Cristi, Texas and Pensacola, Florida and was later stationed in San Diego, California. He was honorably discharged from service on Nov. 19, 1945 and served 20 years as a Reserve Officer.



After the war he worked at Dahlberg Motors, 500 5th Street, in the parts department and then at the D.O.T. for 30 years before retiring as the Purchasing Manager. George Gutman passed away in early 2015 at the age of 91.

His wife, Carmen was moving from Ames and donated four of his WWII Naval pilot uniforms to AHS along with their original footlockers. George had spent most of his life living in Ames and she felt that a part of him should forever remain here.

She decided that the best way to preserve his history and memory was to donate his uniforms to the Society. It was apparent that she really appreciated what the Society was doing in accepting her donation. She felt that we would be keeping them safe and that they might be used in the future for exhibits or educational programs. It was a true pleasure talking with her and it showed us that what we do really does impact the lives of people in the community.

More on the Champlins

Members of the Champlin family were key early business-people in Campustown, building the first permanent brick buildings on Lincoln Way between Welch and Stanton. Prior to those buildings being demolished last year, the Society's staff was able to secure a number of artifacts, not the least of which was the mammoth tile panel that used to grace the entrance.



This occasion prompted other research and many pictures were assembled that Alex Fejfar incorporated into

a short video that is on the homepage of the Society's website. Recently, Del and Georgia Bluhm let us scan two 1920s pictures of the interior of Champlin's hardware store that was located on the second floor - views that we had never seen before! We are very pleased the Bluhms thought to share them with us.



Local Stories in Ames History

The Ames Curfew Whistle

This charming Ames story can be pieced together from a series of colorfully written newspapers articles printed between 1897 and 1915.

April 15 1897: Ordinance passed to provide that all children under the age of eighteen shall keep off the streets, after eight o'clock in the evening from October to April, and after nine o'clock the balance of the year, unless accompanied by a guardian or parent, for violation of which the penalty is a fine of ten dollars or 3 days in jail. There being no bell available to ring, the whistle at the electric light plant will be blown.

May 20 1897: The curfew rang promptly at nine o'clock Tuesday night, or whistles rather, and the howl that whistle at the electric light plant made for about a minute, did not only successfully scare the children off the street but woke up the old people. That whistle is a corker and as a danger signal to the small boy or girl is no doubt a success. The brats skedaddled from Main Street but we are informed made their trysts on the back streets, after the curfew rang. This will no doubt be a success until the novelty of the thing wears off and then it will sink into innocuous desuetude, as other foolish ordinances have before it.

May 27, 1897: The curfew has a splendid effect on the north side; so says a north sider, the usual curbstone and sidewalk loafers by the pair are conspicuously absent, no loafing is noticeable since the law has been heralded forth by the doleful notes of the power house whistle. May the city continue its good work.

April 27, 1899: The city of Ames adds Insult to injury now by blowing the curfew whistle twice each evening, at nine as well as eight o'clock. Great ordinance that curfew ordinance was for a fact.

[At some moment between 1900 and 1908 the curfew whistle stopped.]

June 27, 1908: CURFEW WHISTLE BLOWS AT NINE. Old Ordinance revived and put into effect. Girls and Boys must go home early. Starve mosquitoes and prevent typhoid fever.

No, that whistle is not the fire alarm. Take notice that it is the nine o'clock. That is the curfew whistle and according to "Hoyle" you should be at home if you are under eighteen years of age unless your parents

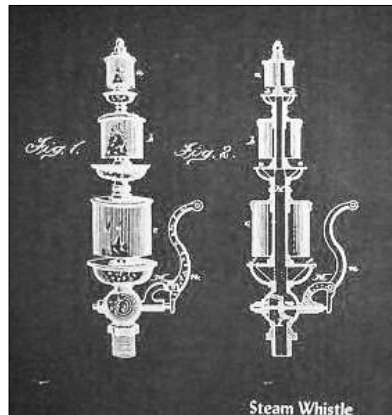
curfew ordinance and hereafter all persons under eighteen who are on the streets or thoroughfares or in the parks after nine p. m. must give an account of themselves to the city marshal or they may be subjected to a fine. The officer has been given full authority and an attempt will be made to make the ruling effective.

The curfew is a good thing. It not only keeps the children off the street at night but it prevents lots of typhoid if a person can see it that way. By keeping the young people at home each night the mosquitoes will sooner or later starve to death and thus a great deal of typhoid fever will be prevented. There may be other good features too, that we might naturally have overlooked.

June 23, 1915: GOODBYE TO OLD Curfew Whistle. Council Orders that ancient custom of eight o'clock shriek be discontinued.

It's goodbye to curfew whistle in Ames. The city council in session Monday night instructed the light committee to request the superintendent stop blowing the whistle at eight o'clock except as a signal for meetings of the fire company. For many years the whistle has shrieked out at eight o'clock each evening. Folks who live near it have complained that it is annoying and that there is no necessity for it. The members of the council are of the same opinion and have ordered that the historic custom be discontinued. Before the eight o'clock hour was established the whistle blew at nine o'clock. The old idea in connection with the blowing of the whistle was to warn all children to get off the streets, but with the rise of the movie, the kids have grown

accustomed to being on the street late at night and the curfew has lost its meaning.



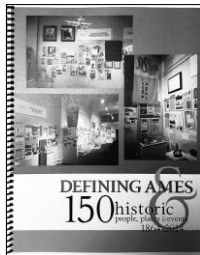
1907 view of the east end of Onondaga (Main Street) with the Power Plant in the center of the picture. The curfew whistle located there could easily be heard around town.

Ames Historical Society
PO Box 821
Ames, Iowa 50010

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Museum Shop



NEW: hand-thrown Ames mug featuring the Bandshell
\$18; deep blue or yellow; great for hostess gifts!

DEFINING AMES: Second Edition
all the text from the Sesqui exhibit – just \$10!

DVDs: Society-produced videos on many
local history topics - each \$15

POSTER & MAGNET: the Ames 150 papercut
by Linda Emmerson, 16"x20" poster, black or maroon,
\$15; magnet \$3

NEW: AHS LOGO BOOK BAG: canvas, \$15

*Open Mon-Fri 1-5pm, Thu. 'til 8pm thru Aug. 27,
Sat 10am-4pm or by apt.*

Open Thursday Nights!

The Ames History Center will be open until 8 pm on Thursday evenings through August 27, making it convenient to include a stop on a trip to Main Street stores that are also open late on Thursdays.

Art Festival Open House Sept. 27

The Octagon Art Festival is always a great event in the Main Street Cultural District. The Society will be open from 10am to 5pm on that Sun., Sept. 27. Visitors can enjoy the People of Our Parks exhibit and the gift shop.

Is it time to renew your membership?

Renewals are due on the one-year anniversary of last year's payment. Check this newsletter's label for information about your membership. Memberships fund the day-to-day operations of the Society, allowing us to continue to be a valued community resource. We thank you!

Introductory - 1st year	\$15	Partner	\$250
Basic	\$30	Benefactor	\$500
Friend	\$50	Patron	\$1,000
Sustaining	\$100		

Name _____

Address _____

Ames Historical Society, PO Box 821, Ames, IA 50010